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Résumé de l'article

Dans les dernières années, des historiens canadiens se sont penchés sur les origines européennes de certains groupes d'immigrants venus au Canada à la fin du XIX^{e} siècle et au début du XX^{e}. Cependant, jusqu'à date, peu d'attention a été accordée à ceux qui immigrèrent au pays avant la Confédération. Pour tenter de remédier à cette lacune, on étudie ici les origines écossaises des immigrants qui s'établirent dans un comté du Haut-Canada, soit celui de Glengarry, entre les années 1784 et 1815.

Dans un premier temps, l'auteur donne un aperçu général des Highlands au XVIII^{e} siècle — l'ouest de Inverness-shire, en particulier — et traite des effets et conséquences qui découlèrent des changements politiques et économiques survenus pendant cette période. Dans un deuxième temps, elle analyse les origines des immigrants qui colonisèrent le comté de Glengarry, les raisons qui provoquèrent leur départ vers l'Amérique de même que les caractéristiques qui marquèrent leur émigration et leur établissement. Enfin, dans un troisième temps, l'auteur l'ait part de ses observations concernant lant les emigrants des Highlands que l'émigration vers l'Amérique du Nord britannique en général.

Peopling Glengarry County
The Scottish Origins of a Canadian Community

MARIANNE McLEAN

INTRODUCTION

A generation ago, American historian Mildred Campbell commented that very little was actually known of the identity of the emigrants to colonial America, and the same point can be made concerning the people who settled in Upper Canada. Campbell's own work signalled the blossoming of considerable interest in the British origins of colonial American immigrants.[1] Yet in 1973, two American historians could still complain of the dearth of studies which began "with the English origins of the migrants" and followed "them through their experience in the New World." Such an approach was of interest since "divisions within the colonies may have owed much to divergences between the various regions of the mother country."[2] While Canadian historians have analysed the European background of late nineteenth and early twentieth century immigrants, little attention has been paid to the origins of those who arrived before Confederation.[3] This paper examines in detail the Scottish origins of the migrants who settled one Upper Canadian county between 1784 and 1815.

Superficially, the Scottish Highlanders who came to Glengarry County are among the best-known settlers of Upper Canada. One of their religious leaders, Bishop

1. For Campbell, see "English Emigration on the Eve of the American Revolution", *American Historical Review*, LXI (1955), especially p. 2; and "Social Origins of Some Early Americans", in James Smith, ed., *Seventeenth Century America: Essays in Colonial History* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1959), pp. 63-89. Carl Bridenbaugh re-examined English emigration in *Vexed and Troubled Englishmen, 1590-1642* (New York, 1968). Campbell's work was recently attacked in David Galenson, " 'Middling People' or 'Common Sort'?: The Social Origins of Some Early Americans Reexamined", *William and Mary Quarterly*, XXXV (1978).
2. T.H. Breen & Stephen Foster, "Moving to the New World: The Character of Early Massachusetts Immigration", *William and Mary Quarterly*, XXX (1973), pp. 190 and 209.
3. The eastern and southern European origins of post-Confederation immigrants have been studied in detail. See, for instance, Robert Harney, "The Commerce of Migration", *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, IX (1977), pp. 42-53; and "Men Without Women: Italian Migrants in Canada, 1855-1930", *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, XI (1979), pp. 29-47. J.J. Manion's *Irish Settlers in Eastern Canada* (Toronto, 1974) was exceptional since it examined the material culture of Irish settlers with reference to its Irish antecedents. Very recently Donald Akenson and J.M. Bumsted have re-examined Irish and Highland immigration in attempts to re-define who the immigrants were. See Donald Akenson, "Ontario: What Ever Happened to the Irish", *Canadian Papers in Rural History*, III (Gananoque, Ont., 1982), and J.M. Bumsted, "Scottish Emigration to the Maritimes, 1770-1815: A New Look at an Old Theme", *Acadiensis*, X (1981).

SCOTLAND

KEY

1 Edinburgh
2 Inverness
3 Glenmoriston
4 Glengarry
5 Lochiel
6 Morar
7 Knoydart
8 Glenelg
9 Kintail
10 Bracadale

Alexander Macdonnell, was a brilliant polemicist who never failed to sing the praises of the loyal Glengarrians to colonial and imperial officials. The comments of army officers and travellers who passed through Glengarry reinforced the image of the loyal Highlander and added to it that of the backward farmer.[4] Canadian historians writing about Highland emigrants have seemingly taken their approach from this literature. Thus H.C. Pentland relies on British travellers for his statement that Highlanders were vain, unhandy and uncooperative, while K.J. Duncan erroneously suggests that the Glengarry immigrants were principally military settlers. Local county histories are unfortunately just at their weakest in describing the origin of the Highlanders who settled in Glengarry.[5] A considerable gap now exists between traditional accounts of the Glengarry immigrants and the knowledge needed to assess the economic and social origins of these Highland settlers.

In the following paper, a detailed look is taken at the circumstances surrounding the Glengarry emigrations. The first part of this study involves a general overview of the Highlands, in particular of western Inverness-shire, in the eighteenth century, and of the effects of political and economic change during that period. The second section presents an analysis of the origins of the Glengarry emigrants, of their reasons for departure, and of the character of their emigration and settlement. Finally, I have made certain observations concerning Highland emigration to Glengarry and emigration to British North America in general.[6]

I

The picture commonly drawn of the Scottish Highlands in the eighteenth century is one of social disintegration and decline. Beset by military defeat and subject to cultural assimilation, the Highlanders are presented as the hapless victims of an alien political and economic order. While this account of events in the Highlands is superficially correct, it fails to reflect either the persistent strength of traditional Gaelic social

4. For Bishop Macdonell's arguments in favour of the loyal Glengarrians, see for instance Public Archives of Canada (hereafter PAC), Upper Canada Sundries (hereafter UCS), Reel C-4504, pp. 2872-5, Rev. McDonell to Wm. Halton, 31 January 1808, and UCS, Reel C-6863, p. 45301, Rev. McDonell to Hillier, 2 April 1827. For travellers, see John Howison, *Sketches of Upper Canada* (Edinburgh, 1821, reprint 1965), pp. 18-24; John McGregor, *British America* (Edinburgh, 1832), p. 530; and Adam Fergusson, *Tour in Canada* (Edinburgh, 1833), p. 85.

5. H.C. Pentland, *Labour and Capital in Canada, 1650-1860* (Toronto, 1981), pp. 93-4. Kenneth Duncan, "Patterns of Settlement in the East", in W.S. Reid, ed., *The Scottish Tradition in Canada* (Toronto, 1976). J.A. Macdonell's *Sketches of Glengarry in Canada* (Montreal, 1893) focused on the Glengarry gentlemen who led several of the migrations. Ewen Ross and Royce MacGillivray in their *A History of Glengarry* (Belleville, 1979) describe the emigrants only in very general terms.

6. This paper is drawn from the writer's 1982 University of Edinburgh doctoral thesis, "'In the new land a new Glengarry': Migration from the Scottish Highlands to Upper Canada, 1750-1820." Chapters 2 to 5 of the thesis include a detailed examination of economic and social life in western Inverness in the period up to and during the emigrations, only a summary of which is presented here in section I. Chapters 6 to 12 of the thesis deal extensively with the process of emigration and settlement, an outline of which is found in the second section of this paper.

structures or the degree of control which the clansmen continued to exert over their daily life. In fact, popular Gaelic culture flourished and some of the greatest Gaelic poets wrote during the eighteenth century. It is against this backdrop of an embattled, but resilient culture that Highland emigration to Upper Canada must be viewed.

By 1700 Highland society represented an anomally in the complex, commercial society of England and southern Scotland. Throughout the late Middle Ages, the north had remained outside the control of the Scottish government in Edinburgh, and it maintained its independence from the government in London during the troubled years of the seventeenth century. Social organization in the Highlands was still clearly tribal in origin, justice was local and personal, and agriculture operated at a subsistence level. The emigrants to Glengarry County came principally from the estates of Cameron of Lochiel, Macdonnell of Glengarry and Knoydart, and MacLeod of Glenelg at the geographic heart of the Highlands in western Inverness-shire. Although surrounded by other Gaelic-speaking districts and thereby insulated from the immediate influence of southern Britain, western Inverness was nonetheless in a vulnerable position, particularly after the defeat of the Jacobites in 1745. Its location at the western end of the Great Glen and across the road to the Isles, as well as the ardent Jacobitism of its Catholic and its Protestant inhabitants alike, made western Inverness an important centre for southern efforts to "improve" or "civilize" the Highlands.

At mid-eighteenth century, society in western Inverness consisted of a number of kin-based, hierarchical communities. At the head of each group of communities was the clan chief, a paternal ruler around whom revolved economic affairs, the right to justice, and much social life. The clan gentlemen, many of whom were close relations of the chief, received large land holdings from him and assisted in leading the clansmen. Perhaps a majority in the community were tenants, but they varied in status from substantial farmers with a large number of cattle, to joint-tenants who shared a farm, to sub-tenants who paid rent to another tenant. Below these were the cottars and servants, who had no direct share at all in the land. In spite of these differences of economic and social status, traditional Gaelic society, in western Inverness and elsewhere, can best be described as of a whole or one piece. While men held different amounts of land or fulfilled various functions, the people saw themselves as members of a single community. This single identity is reflected in the unity of Gaelic literature, whose aristocratic works were known by the people and whose popular works were sometimes created by the gentry.[7]

The economic backbone of this traditional social order was subsistence agriculture based on cattle. Blackadder's description of the economy of Skye and North Uist in 1799 could be applied equally well to western Inverness at the time of the Rebellions:

> At present every Family in the Country is a Kind of independent Colony of itself, They turn up what part of the soil is necessary to support them with Meal....take their own Fish, Manufacture, and make the most of their own cloaths and Husbandry utensils. Their cows supply them in Summer with Butter and Milk, after which a few of them are sold to pay for the small spot on which they live.

7. Derick Thomas quoted in Kenneth Mackinnon, *Language, Education and Social Process in a Gaelic Community* (London, 1977), p. 10.

Large estates were divided into farms of varying sizes and quality; a farm could be held by one man, or, more commonly, be shared by a number of tenants. Few of the western Inverness farms had more than five acres of land suitable for growing grain. The remaining acreage was given over to pasture, including summer grazings known as sheillings located in the hills some distance from the farmhouses.[8]

The tenants of western Inverness were good farmers, making skilled and balanced use of available resources. Archibald Menzies, General Inspector of estates annexed to the Crown after 1745, noted with approval the manner in which the Barisdale tenants in Knoydart managed their farms. The tenants moved their cattle regularly from one pasture to another, ensuring that the land was used to greatest advantage: milk cows were first, store and yeld cattle next, and horses and sheep last in grazing over any particularly good field. The Barisdale tenants were experts in cattle-breeding and in the treatment of animal disease; they even took into account the nutritional value of various grasses when pasturing their livestock.[9] The agricultural skill which the Barisdale clansmen demonstrated to Menzies was shared by most of the tenants in western Inverness.

Traditional Highland agriculture has too often been judged by the standards of eighteenth century improvers. As Scottish economic historian Malcolm Gray pointed out, traditional agricultural practices represented a balance between the physical environment and possible farming techniques on one hand, and social considerations on the other. Since a large population was a military necessity until 1750, labour-saving practices were pointless in an area with no alternate employment. Instead, "any device, however laborious, that would increase...yield was justified."[10] The land itself provided no large areas of fertile ground that might serve as an enticement to improved agrarian practices, and the climate, varying from the overwhelmingly wet and mild to the sub-arctic, set further limitations on agricultural techniques. Highland agriculture had achieved a relatively successful balance between the needs of the people and the availability of resources.

The basis of traditional society in the Highlands was the community's right to land. Although in the eye of southern Scottish law, land belonged to the chief who had legal title to it, the clansmen firmly believed that they were entitled to a share in the land. Ownership of land in the modern sense of an individual's exclusive right to it was quite foreign to Highland tenants at mid-eighteenth century. Rather the tenants believed that the community which for generations had maintained itself on the land, had an enduring right to the land. This age-old principle, never conceded by the tenants, was nonetheless denied by the British government after 1750 when the Highlands first passed under southern domination.

The half century following the Jacobite defeat on Culloden Moor witnessed radical change in western Inverness that was only partly the result of the Hanoverian

8. Scottish Record Office (hereafter SRO), RH2/8/24, pp. 107-8, Blackadder's Survey, 1799. Only three of Cameron of Lochiel's thirty-six farms produced enough corn to support their inhabitants and provide a surplus for sale; most farms yielded only enough for six or nine months' subsistence.
9. Virginia Willis, ed., *Reports of the Annexed Estates* (Edinburgh, 1973), p. 100.
10. Malcolm Gray, *The Highland Economy* (Edinburgh, 1957), p. 35.

victory. Government regulations designed to inculcate southern values and norms of behaviour in the clansmen, and particularly in the Highland gentry, predate the 1745 rebellion by more than a century. Similarly, the penetration of modern commercial attitudes towards the land dates to the early eighteenth century, at least on the periphery of the Highlands, and to a growing involvement in the market economy. The principal effect of the Uprising was to intensify the process of integrating the Highlands into British society and to commit government resources and authority to that task. The simplest, and yet most far-reaching, achievement of government was its successful imposition of southern law and order across the Highlands. Until mid-eighteenth century in western Inverness, justice was administered through local, heritable jurisdictions, and traditional clan military organization was essential to the protection of life and property. Within a dozen years following the suppression of the rebellion, parliamentary laws were enforced in the Highlands — as illustrated by the tragic end of several infamous cattle lifters and the defensive *raison d'être* of the clan had disappeared.

The extension of southern rule into the Highlands made possible the introduction of improved agriculture there. In the aftermath of the rebellion, the British government made a determined effort to develop the infrastructure necessary for a modern economy in the north. Numerous roads and bridges greatly improved communication within western Inverness and provided access to southern Britain; similarly, schools and churches were established in districts not previously well served by these institutions. Two distinct stages are apparent in the improvement of agriculture in western Inverness. During the thirty years from 1750 to 1780, landlords and government officials introduced such reforms as better housing, the fencing of fields and new crops so as to increase production on traditional joint-tenant farms. In the second stage following 1780, landlords completely reorganized clan estates with the creation of large-scale sheep farms and separate crofting townships.

The first stage of agricultural improvement was compatible with the clansmen's traditional belief in the community's right to land and generally most tenants were able to maintain their usual share in a farm. However, in certain Highland districts, including Glen Garry, rent increases were extremely high in the late 1760s and 1770s; tenants here had sometimes to choose between a reduced income and the loss of their farms. The second stage of improvement completely ignored the community's right to clan lands. Highland landlords took advantage of their exclusive legal title to their estates and accepted the modern concept that land should be put to the most commercially viable use. In the years after 1780, landlords rapidly adopted large-scale sheep farming, which doubled or quadrupled their income, at the expense of denying their clansmen a reasonable living from the land. The flood of emigration that followed from western Inverness was the clansmen's response to this denial of the community's right to land.

II

The Highlanders who emigrated to Glengarry County were a remarkably homogeneous group who came to Canada by choice. These clansmen originated in the same geographic district, leaving Scotland with their neighbours in extended family groups; the emigrants were relatively prosperous farmers led by clan gentlemen. They left the

Highlands because increasing rents and large-scale sheep farming destroyed the community's right to a living from the land. The emigrations to Glengarry were generally organized by the clansmen themselves and they departed from the Highland port nearest their home. The coherent identity of the Glengarry settlers was the result of the community motivation for and control of the emigration.

Nine major emigrations of some 2500 people substantially settled Glengarry County, Upper Canada. The first emigrants left Scotland in 1773, but were resettled in Canada as Loyalists in 1784. Other clansmen followed in 1785, 1786, 1790, 1792, 1793, in two sailings in 1802, and in 1815.[11] A majority of the Glengarry immigrants came from neighbouring districts in western Inverness: Glen Garry, Lochiel, Knoydart, and Glenelg all sent successive groups of emigrants to the Upper Canadian county. There were departures from Glen Garry in 1773, 1785, 1792, and 1802, from Lochiel in 1792 and 1802, from Knoydart in 1786, 1802, and 1815, and from Glenelg in 1793, 1802, and 1815. In addition adjacent districts with political or kinship ties to this region provided a further number of emigrants. Thus the Grants, Camerons and Macdonells of Glenmoriston joined the 1773 emigration from nearby Glen Garry, and families from Kintail and Glenshiel were part of the large sailing from Glenelg and Knoydart in 1802. Even individual emigrations, both during and after the group departures, left chiefly from this same geographic heartland or its immediate vicinity.

The Glengarry emigrants left Scotland chiefly in family groups, which included a large number of children. A passenger list survives for the 1790 emigrant party, describing the age and family structure of that group. Aside from four servants and four single adults, the remaining seventy-nine passengers travelled with family members. Families with young children were over-represented in the 1790 party since 42 per cent of the passengers were twelve years and under, in contrast to 34 per cent of the Scottish population as a whole.[12] The less detailed information available concerning the remaining Glengarry emigrants suggests that families, often with young

11. For 425 emigrants in 1773, see Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), T1/499, Campbell & McPhail, 13 December 1773; for three hundred emigrants in 1785, see Scottish Catholic Archives (hereafter SCA), Blairs Papers, Bishop A. MacDonald, 5 August 1785; for 520 in 1786, see *Quebec Gazette*, 7 September 1786; for eighty-seven in 1790, see PAC, Reel B-48 CO42/71, p. 82, *British Queen*; for some 150 emigrants in 1792 see *Quebec Gazette*, 27 September 1792; for some 150 emigrants in 1793 see PAC, RG1 L3, Upper Canada Land Petitions (hereafter UCLP), Mc21 (1837-9), no. 46, Capt. Alex McLeod; for some 750 emigrants in 1802, see *Selkirk's Diary* (Toronto, 1958), p. 199 and also *Quebec Gazette*, 25 August, 5 and 15 September 1802; for 363 emigrants in 1815, see PAC, MG11, CO385, vol. 2 and compare to Ontario Archives (hereafter OA), RG1 C-1-3, vol. 101, March 1816.

12. For the 1790 passenger list, see PAC, Reel B-48, CO42/71, p. 82. For estimates of the Scottish population, see Michael Flinn, *Scottish Population History* (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 263 and 445.

children, also dominated other departures.[13] But if most emigrants arrived in Glengarry accompanied by their family, they also travelled with or joined related families in the New World. For instance among the 1786 emigrants were the first cousins Angus Ban Macdonell, Malcolm Macdougall and Allen Macdonald, who were met in Glengarry by Angus Ban's brother Finan, uncle John and cousin Duncan. Similarly the families of John Roy Macdonald and brother Angus left Scotland in 1786 to join their Loyalist cousins, Alex and John Macdonald; other related families emigrated sixteen years later in the 1802 party. The limited number of Gaelic Christian names and the overwhelming number of Macdonalds, or even MacMillans, makes tracing family relationships among the emigrants a frustrating experience. Nonetheless, the available evidence strongly suggests that most emigrants to Glengarry County were bound by family ties to several other emigrant or settler families.[14]

The great majority of Glengarry emigrants came from the broad middle rank of Highland society and as would be expected from the agrarian basis of traditional Highland life were predominantly farmers. Only in the 1815 party were 40 per cent of the heads of household craftsmen and labourers. These men emigrated chiefly from Perthshire in the southern Highlands where the land-holding reorganization that accompanied the new agricultural economy was oldest and had had most effect.[15] Neither the very rich nor the very poor are evident among the emigrants to Glengarry during this period. Although there were obvious distinctions of wealth and status among the many farmers who emigrated, the majority seem to have been tenants with a right to a share in the land. Even the craftsmen and labourers in the 1815 party were men of more than subsistence income since they were able to pay the deposit for their passage to Canada.[16]

13. Thus in 1773, 47 per cent of the 425 emigrants leaving Fort William were children; not all of these emigrants however necessarily settled in Glengarry (PRO, T1 499, Campbell & McPhail to Nelthorpe, 13 December 1773). Among fifty-two families in the 1786 group, there were "many children" (PAC, "S" Series, Reel C-3001, pp. 9909-15, John Craigie to Stephen Delancey, 4 September 1786). Reference is made to twenty-seven families in the 1792 group (OA, RG1 A-1-1, vol. 49, Richard Duncan, 6 November 1792). In the 1802 McMillan emigration, 30 per cent of the group was twelve and under, while in the 1802 west coast emigration, 43 per cent of the group was sixteen and under (*Parliamentary Papers*, 1802-3 [80] IV, p. 41). In 1815 sixty-one families and eight bachelors emigrated to Glengarry; each family had an average of 5.7 members (PAC, MG11, CO385, vol. 2 compared to OA, RG1 C-1-3, vol. 101, Return of Locations, March 1816). No account has been found of the family relationships of the 1785 emigrant party.

14. Information concerning John Roy Macdonald was obtained from Alex Fraser, Lancaster, Ontario; Mr. Fraser has an extensive genealogical chart of John Roy's family, the Macdonalds of Loup. For Angus Ban's cousins, see PAC, MG29 C29 Notebook... 1st page blank, Interview with James Duncan Macdonald, age 92; also my interview with Mrs. Florence Macdonell of the Glen Road, Williamstown, Ontario. For the 1802 arrivals, see OA, Father Ewen John Macdonald Collection, Box 8, C-1-2, Typescript: Copy of letter from Angus McDonald (John Roy's son) to Roderick McDonald, 14 October 1804.

15. Of the sixty-nine heads of household in the 1815 party, twenty were craftsmen and sixteen were labourers. Many of the latter were young men, not long in the labour force.

16. Numerous labourers and craftsmen wanted to participate in the assisted emigrant scheme that brought the 1815 group to Glengarry, but could not afford the deposit. See PAC, MG11 Q135 pt. 2, Memorial of Allan McDonell, etc., Fort Augustus, March 1815.

Perceptions of the social and economic status of the Glengarry emigrants have differed on opposite sides of the Atlantic. Scottish sources make clear the relative prosperity of the emigrants in comparison to the clansmen who remained in the Highlands. Thus in 1785, the Highland Catholic bishop Alexander MacDonald reported that the 300 emigrants leaving Glen Garry and Glen Moriston were "the principal tenants" and "the most reputable Catholics" of the two districts. Similarly when 520 clansmen left Knoydart in 1786, the Catholic hierarchy explained that "those who emigrate are just the people who are a little better off." Few of the Glengarry emigrants were servants or cottars, from the bottom one-third of Highland society; most were tenants, which in the Scottish context of the time implied a middling social and economic status.[17] In contrast, Canadian sources generally emphasize the poverty of the Highland emigrants arriving at Quebec. The same emigrants, who in July 1786 were described as "a little better-off" in Scotland, landed at Quebec in September in a "very destitute and hopeless situation."[18] In October 1790, Lord Dorchester felt obliged to give assistance to another group of Highland emigrants to prevent "their becoming a burden to the public or the Crown", and in 1802 a public subscription was opened in Quebec for the indigent Highlanders who arrived on the *Neptune*.[19]

These apparent contradictions between Scottish and Canadian descriptions of the Glengarry emigrants arise from the different vantage points of the observers, and from the effects of emigration on the clansmen. When the emigrants were compared to the population of the Highlands as a whole, it is evident that they were relatively well off, comprising somewhat more than the middle one-third of local society. Most of the Glengarry emigrants were able to leave Scotland because they were tenants: unlike servants or cottars, tenants could realize a small capital sum through the sale of their stock. However, as the second stage of agricultural improvement took root in the north, the tenants' financial position generally worsened and fewer, or poorer, tenants found it possible to leave Scotland after 1800. When the Glengarry emigrants reached Quebec, many had little more than the fare needed to travel on to Upper Canada. From a Canadian perspective, Highland tenants were never very well off, but at this point in their journey, the Glengarry emigrants were particularly poor in comparison to the inhabitants of Canada. Some had exhausted their resources in the major capital investment of emigration. Yet it remains extremely important not to confuse the

17. For Bishop A. MacDonald, see SCA, Blairs Papers, Bishop Alexander MacDonald, 5 August 1785. For Catholic hierarchy in 1786, see OA, Father Ewen J. Macdonald Collection, Box 8 B-7, Two extracts from a letter written by Bishops Hay, MacDonald & Geddes, 28 July 1786. The 1773 emigrant party was made up of the "best" of Glengarry's tenants; see SCA, Blairs Papers, Bishop John MacDonald, 10 February 1773. For the tenant status of the 1790 emigrants, see PAC, "S" Series, Reel C-3006, p. 15917, Report. For the tenant status of the 1802 McMillan emigrants, see Glengarry's offer to them in SRO, RH2/4/87, f. 151, 21 March 1802. The 1815 emigrants, farmers, craftsmen and labourers alike, possessed financial resources not shared by the entire population; see footnote 16.

18. PAC, "S" Series, Reel C-3001, pp. 9909-15, Hope to McDonell, 25 September 1786.

19. For the 1786 emigrants in Quebec, see PAC, "S" Series, Reel C-3001, pp. 9909-15, Craigie to Delancey, 4 September 1786. For Dorchester's comments, see PAC, Reel B-48, CO42/72, pp. 57-8, Dorchester to Grenville, 10 November 1790. For subscription in 1802, see *Quebec Gazette*, 16 and 30 September 1802.

financial condition of the emigrants on arrival in Canada with their actual social and economic standing in Highland society in the generation before departure.

In social background, the leaders of seven Glengarry emigrant groups differed somewhat from the majority of clansmen emigrants. The leaders of the emigrant parties can be identified as Highland gentlemen, whose families had traditionally played an important role in clan life. Thus the various Macdonell gentlemen who organized the 1773, 1785, 1786, 1790, and 1792 emigrations were all cousins (and in the Highlands a fourth cousin is a close relation) of the Glengarry chief.[20] Similarly Alex McLeod, leader of the 1793 emigration and Archibald McMillan of Murlaggan, organizer of the 1802 departure from Fort William, were related to Glengarry and to Lochiel respectively.[21] Other men, not as closely connected to the chief but rather men of standing in their local communities, also played a significant role in organizing the emigrant groups. Angus Ban Macdonell of Muniall was a well-established Knoydart tenant in the 1786 party, and he is described by Glengarry County tradition as a "leading man" of the group. Archibald McMillan named eight men from across Glen Garry and Locheil who helped him "in preserving good Order among the People" during their 1802 voyage. The other sailing that year, made by the *Neptune*, had no gentlemen leaders; instead the emigrants appointed Duncan McDonald, Murdoch McLennan and Norman Morrison to speak for them. These men seemingly represented the three districts from which the emigrants were drawn, and McLennan at least had been a prosperous tenant in his community.[22] Neither clan chiefs nor major landlords participated in the Glengarry emigrations but the second level of traditional community leaders, including both gentlemen and locally-respected tenants, were represented in them.

The Glengarry emigrants left the Highlands by choice in face of the rapid transformation of traditional Gaelic society under the impact of commercial land development. The first, underlying cause of this emigration was the economic squeeze which struck the tenants of western Inverness in the late eighteenth century. While tenants' incomes rose slowly, rents increased rapidly, particularly after 1780 when competition from sheep farmers for Highland farms drove rents up 400 per cent and

20. Macdonell of Aberchalder, Collachie & Leek were fourth cousins, and Macdonell of Scotus, a second cousin, of Glengarry; these men led the 1773 group. Allan Macdonell, who headed the 1785 group, was descended from a 17th century Glengarry chief. Father Alex Macdonell of the 1786 party was a first cousin, Miles Macdonell of the 1790 group a third cousin, and Alexander Macdonell of Greenfield of the 1792 party a second cousin, of Glengarry.

21. For Murlaggan, see Rev. Somerled MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber* (Glasgow, 1971), pp. 66-79. For McLeod, see Clan MacLeod, *The MacLeods of Glengarry* (Iroquois, Ont., 1971), pp. 37, and 63-6.

22. For Angus Ban, see SRO, GD128/8/1/5 for Ranald McDonell of Scotus' comments describing Angus Ban as a man of consequence; see also PAC, MG29 C29 Notebook: Family I from R.S., question 2, "Col. James' father was a leading man". For men helping McMillan, see PAC, LCLP, Reel C-2545, p. 66478, Petition of Arch McMillan, 6 August 1804. For *Neptune* spokesmen, see *Quebec Gazette*, 16 September 1802; also John McLennan, "The Early Settlement of Glengarry", *Transactions of the Celtic Society of Montreal*, pp. 113-21.

more over 20 years.[23] In many instances, the clansmen found their holdings reduced and in others, tenants put themselves in debt competing with sheep farmers for long-term leases. Bishop MacDonald's description of a new "Set" or rental of farms on Clanranald's property illustrates the financial quandary faced by tenants in the west Highlands:

> The Set has turned out more favourable to the small tenants than what we were at first given to understand would be the case. Every Body was allowed to overbid each other, notwithstanding the former possessors had preference, & got, some of them, a considerable deduction of the offers made by better Bets than themselves. The rents are however exorbitantly high & great numbers will not be able to make them good for any length of time, unless divine providence will interfere.[24]

The nine Glengarry emigrant groups left Scotland over a forty year period that spanned the intensification of this financial squeeze and saw the beginning of the disappearance of the traditional Highland tenant. The tenants who put off their departure for several decades after the introduction of sheep farming paid an increasing price for their delay and often emigrated "with sadly reduced possessions."

Farm rents rose in Glen Garry by 130 to 170 per cent in 1772 and the 200 clansmen who left the area for America in 1773 gave high rents as the cause of their departure.[25] The Highlanders in the 1785, 1786, 1790, 1792 and 1793 parties emigrated shortly after the introduction of sheep farming broke up their traditional communities.[26] Other western Inverness clansmen attempted to adapt to the new agricultural economy but found themselves impoverished by their efforts. In 1802 close to four hundred of Glengarry's tenants and their families refused to pay yet another rent increase and emigrated instead, while emigrants from Glenelg and Kintail also left communities threatened by sheep farms. The 1815 emigrants from the same districts witnessed a further decline in their land and fortunes before they too abandoned the Highlands.[27] The nine group emigrations from western Inverness to Glengarry County were the result of the landlords' denial of reasonably priced land to their tenants.

23. For instance, on McDonell of Scotus' small property in Knoydart, rents rose by 687% from £56 to £385 between 1773 and 1785; see Charles Fraser-Macintosh, "The Macdonells of Scotos", *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, XVI, p. 88.
24. SCA, Blairs Papers, Bishop MacDonald, 20 April 1789.
25. PRO, T1 499, Campbell & McPhail to Nelthorpe, 13 December 1773.
26. Glengarry's plans for sheep farming resulted in his ordering the removal of tenants in Glen Garry and Knoydart in 1785; see SRO, GD128/65/12, Precept of Removing, 1 April 1785; also SRO, GD128/7/1/39, 41, 45, Ranald McDonell, 26 and 30 November 1785 and 13 February 1786. The 1792 emigrants from Glen Garry were doubtless affected by Glengarry's improvements. Lord Dorchester reported that the 1790 emigrants had lost their holdings to sheep farmers; see PAC, "S" Series, Reel C-3006, p. 15917. The 1795 Statistical Account of Glenelg reported that emigration had followed the introduction of sheep farms there; this would include the 1793 Glengarry immigrants.
27. For the 1802 emigration from Glengarry's property, see SRO, RH2/4/87 f.151, Letter from Alex McDonell, 21 March 1802. For other 1802 emigrants, see John McLennan, "The Early Settlement of Glengarry." For Glenelg and Knoydart emigrants in both 1802 and 1815 see *New Statistical Account of Scotland*, IX, Glenelg, p. 136. That the clansmen who emigrated were not completely impoverished is evident in their ability to pay their fare (or deposit in the case of the 1815 group) to Canada.

Although the tenants of western Inverness faced a financial crisis as a result of the loss of traditional farm lands, this loss did not compel them to emigrate. In spite of the forcible introduction of sheep farming and its accompanying evictions, emigration was not the only option open to the clansmen. Some tenants were able to maintain a share in a traditional farm, albeit smaller and at a higher rent. Others acquired a croft, a piece of land individually held, but too small to support a family; the crofters were employed at estate improvements, kelping or fishing.[28] The remainder of the tenants became labourers, congregating in the small villages that appeared for the first time in the Highlands, or migrating south, ultimately to Glasgow and Edinburgh.[29] The Glengarry settlers chose emigration over these other options available to the tenants of western Inverness.

The reason for the clansmen's decision in favour of emigration and hence the second fundamental cause of the departures was their desire to live in a community of kin and friends. Economic pressures alone were not sufficient to bring such a conservative people suddenly to abandon a much-loved native land for the sparsely settled wilderness of Upper Canada. But the commercialization of land holding in the Highlands and particularly the adoption of large-scale sheep farming not only damaged the tenants' financial well-being, but also broke apart traditional Highland communities. In some cases several adjacent farm settlements were cleared, while in others high rents forced a number of tenants to surrender their holdings. The tenants of western Inverness could not accept this destruction of local communities and many preferred to emigrate to Canada where they could both satisfy their desire for land and re-establish kin and neighbourhood groups. In 1790 when tenants from Eigg and the west coast of the mainland "...heard from their friends & relatives settled in the upper parts of...[Quebec] that upon removing to this Country they would be able to obtain portions of the waste lands of the Crown contiguous to them, they were glad to embark for Canada."[30] The composition of the emigrant groups, the organization of the departures, and the nature of the settlement in Upper Canada confirms the importance of community in sending the clansmen to Glengarry County.

The identity of the Glengarry emigrants has already been established, and that analysis points out the significance of family and friends in the formation of the emigrant groups. In addition eight of the nine departures were organized and controlled by the Highlanders themselves; only the 1815 emigration, a government sponsored sailing, broke this pattern. Between 1773 and 1802, however, no emigrant agent was needed in western Inverness to drum up dissatisfaction with home and enthusiasm for North America. The decision to emigrate was taken within the local

28. In spite of evictions, some tenants remained in Glengarry, even on the farms from which they were supposedly cleared; compare SRO, GD128/65/12, Precept of Removing, 1 April 1785, with Reverend Somerled MacMillan, *Bygone Lochaber* (Glasgow, 1971), p. 89 and pp. 236-9. In Knoydart, the south coast was seemingly left to "the remains" of the "antient tenants of Glengarry"; see Fraser-Macintosh *Antiquarian Notes*, 2nd Series (Inverness, 1897), pp. 134-5. Some kelping was carried out on the coasts of Knoydart and Glenelg.

29. Father Ranald McDonald reported that many of Glengarry's tenants had settled in Fort Augustus after sheep farms were introduced; Father Ranald expected many to end up in Edinburgh and Glasgow. SCA, Blairs Papers, Ranald McDonald, 23 June 1789.

30. PAC, "S" Series, Reel C-3006, p. 15917, Report to Dorchester.

community, although kin and friends from neighbouring estates were sometimes asked to join a group. The emigrants often appointed a gentleman from among their number to go south to Glasgow to hire a ship for the voyage. Thus Lieut. Angus Macdonell and Father Alexander Macdonell travelled to Greenock to charter a ship for the 1786 emigrants, and Archibald McMillan went to Glasgow on the same business in 1802.[31] The Glengarry emigrants, seemingly with the exception only of the 1815 party, did not leave Scotland from a Lowland port. In a reflection of the community control of the emigration, the clansmen sailed from the port nearest their home, Fort William in 1773, 1792 and 1802; Loch Nevis in Knoydart in 1786 and 1802; Culreagh in Glenelg in 1793, and from Eigg or Arisaig in 1790.[32] This local control of the departure underlines the continuing vitality of community, in spite of the tenants having apparently chosen a course of action destructive of traditional community ties.

The pattern of settlement of the nine emigrant groups from western Inverness emphasizes the clansmen's pre-eminent interest in acquiring land within a Highland community. The re-location of the 1773 emigrants in Upper Canada as Loyalist refugees led another five groups to join them over an eight year period. Each successive group of emigrants received Crown land in a body, distinct from but generally adjacent to previous arrivals.[33] While most clansmen thereby settled in close proximity to those kin and neighbours who had accompanied them to Canada, a few took up land near friends who had emigrated some years earlier. Thus four families of the 1785 emigrant party from Glen Garry and Glenmoriston settled in the front of Charlottenburgh, among Loyalists born in the same Scottish districts.[34]Within a brief ten years, some

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31. For 1786, see SRO, GD128/8/1/3, Charles McDonell, 1 April 1786. For 1802, see PAC, MG24 I 183, Account Book of Voyage to America, pp. 44-5.

32. For 1773, see PRO, T1/499, Campbell & McPhail, 13 December 1773. For 1786, see SCA, Blairs Papers, Alexander McDonald, Keppoch, 23 May 1786. For 1790, see SCA, Blairs Papers, James MacDonald, 12 October 1790; MacDonald reports that a "King's Ship was ordered to the coast" to impress men and thereby prevent emigration, a fact which clearly suggests that the emigrants were intending to leave from the Highland coast. For 1792, see SCA, Blairs Papers, Ranald MacDonald, 16 July 1792. For 1793, see PAC, UCLP Reel C-2139, Mc(1837-9), no. 46, Alex McLeod. For 1802, see *Quebec Gazette*, 25 August, 5 and 15 September 1802.

33. The Loyalists settled in the 1st to 3rd concessions of Lancaster and the first five concessions of Charlottenburgh; see PAC, RG1 L4, vol. 12, and McNiff's Map of the New Settlements, 1784. The 1785 and 1786 emigrants arrived in Canada within six months of each other and were generally settled together in the 5th to 8th concessions of Lancaster and the 7th to 9th concessions of Charlottenburgh; see PAC, RG19, vol. 4447, Parcel 3, no. 7, Sundry persons...located by Mr. James McDonell. The 1790 emigrants were located in the 12th concession of Lancaster since the 10th and 11th had been set aside as additional Loyalist lands; see PAC, RG1 L4, vol. 10, p. 107a, and Government of Ontario, Department of Lands and Forests, Plan of Lancaster by James McDonell. The 1792 emigrants were located in the 13th & 14th concessions of Lancaster; see PAC, RG1 L4, vol. 15, List of applicants, 18 and 26 March, 1 and 16 April 1793 compared to OA, RG1 A-1-1, vol. 49, p. 327, Return of Sundry persons. The 1793 emigrants were placed in the 15th and 16th concessions of Lancaster; see OA, RG1 C-1-4, vol. 9, Return, Glengarry, 10 October 1794.

34. PAC, MG 29, C29 Notebook...1st page blank, Capt. Grey, age 93. They were Arch Grant, Alex Roy and Kenneth and Alex Macdonell, who settled near Summerstown.

three hundred western Inverness clansmen and their families had obtained land and created a new Highland community in Glengarry County.

The same determination to acquire land in the company of family and friends also marked the settlement of the three large emigrant groups that reached Glengarry after 1800. However, changes in land granting regulations, the limited number of lots then available in the county and the very modest financial resources of the clansmen meant that few of the 1802 emigrants received a Crown grant in Glengarry.[35] Several gentlemen offered the emigrants land elsewhere in the Canadas, but such schemes were not attractive to the Highlanders who preferred to live in the vicinity of their friends. Thus General Hunter's attempt to settle the 1802 emigrants near York failed, because "they would not agree to go so far out of the world."[36] Instead the 1802 emigrants stayed with friends, rented and ultimately bought land in Glengarry, or in a few instances in the adjacent counties of Soulanges and Stormont.[37] The 1815 settlers were given one hundred acre lots as assisted emigrants; these lots were Crown reserves mostly located in the north-eastern quarter of the county, which enabled the emigrants to settle in reasonable proximity to one another.[38] The choice made by one of the 1815 emigrants is indicative of the way in which family ties were more often significant than economic considerations in the settlement of Glengarry. After Duncan McDonell rejected the rear half of lot 2 in the fourth concession of Lochiel as "bad land," John McRea asked to be given the same lot. McRea explained that since "no other vacant lot was to be had in the settlement," he was anxious to acquire this land and "be settled along with his Brothers and names sakes who were located on adjoining lots."[39]

III

This examination of the origins and character of Highland emigration to Glengarry County gives several insights into early immigration to Upper Canada that are of

35. I have not found any reference to Crown grants to 1802 emigrants in Glengarry; a small number may have acquired such grants. Government officials planned to settle the 1802 emigrants in a body, as had been the case with earlier Highland emigrant groups, in Finch township, in north-west Stormont. When that land was finally made available in 1805, only twenty-nine emigrants from western Inverness took locations there. A lack of cash to pay fees, and perhaps for the Knoydart and Morar emigrants (none of whom settled in Finch), the distance from numerous relatives in Glengarry, prevented three-quarters of the 1802 emigrants from accepting a grant in the western township.

36. For General Hunter, see T.D. Selkirk, *Selkirk's Diary* (New York, 1969), p. 200. Selkirk himself tried to recruit some of these recent arrivals for his Baldoon settlement in 1804; see *ibid.*, p. 342. Arch McMillan, leader of one 1802 group, later attempted to organize a group settlement in Argenteuil, Lower Canada, but few of the emigrants were willing to leave Glengarry and district.

37. The 1802 emigrants settled in all four Glengarry townships, albeit often in local concentrations. Some obtained land in the 1st of Lancaster (*Selkirk's Diary*, p. 198), the 9th of Lancaster, and the 4th to 9th of Lochiel (PAC, MG29 C29). Ten families settled in the 3rd concession Indian Lands in western Charlottenburgh. Others are found in scattered lots in Charlottenburgh and Kenyon. At least four families settled in Soulanges (PAC, MG24 I 183, Templeton, etc.); the parents of a Hugh McDonell settled in the 9th of Cornwall township [PAC, Reel C-2200, UCLP, M11 (1811-9), no. 316].

38. PAC, Reel C-4547, UCS, p. 12906, Abstract of Locations.

39. PAC, Reel C-2208, UCLP, M14 (1821-6), no. 540, especially n-q.

interest to both Canadian and Scottish historians. First, a knowledge of the emigrants' background underlines the remarkable degree of control which the Highlanders exercised over their departure. In spite of economic pressures and the narrowing of options open to Highland tenants, many western Inverness clansmen were able to choose a course of action that satisfied traditional aspirations for land and community. Secondly, the confusion which has existed over the social and economic origin of the Highland settlers reveals the importance of first looking at any group of emigrants in context of the society which they left behind. In the case of the Glengarry emigrants, their strained resources on arrival at Quebec or in the early years of settlement by no means reflected their previous position of modest consequence in the Highlands. These two points emphasize the value of a knowledge of the British, or European, communities which the emigrants left for Upper Canada.

Thirdly, Highland emigration in this period can well be seen as an act of protest against the radical transformation of Highland social and agrarian structures in the late eighteenth century. While the clansmen reluctantly accomodated themselves to the commercialization of the Highland economy and the shift of power to southern authorities, they resolutely maintained their right to obtain a living from the land in a Gaelic community. When that right was denied, in a minor degree by large rent increases, and then overwhelmingly by the creation of sheep farms, many of the people of western Inverness emigrated to Upper Canada. The kin and neighbourhood base of the emigration and the eager acquisition of land within a Gaelic settlement are evidence of the emigrants' continuing commitment to those traditional values.[40] Between 1784 and 1803 emigration, particularly from Knoydart, Glen Garry and Glenelg, seems to have been limited almost solely by the cost of a passage across the Atlantic. Large numbers of emigrants left western Inverness, including close to 25 per cent of the population of Knoydart in one sailing in 1786. A more profound, better-organized protest against the creation of sheep farms and the loss of traditional lands and community cannot easily be imagined.[41]

Finally, the origins and experience of the Glengarry immigrants can be compared to other British immigrant groups in pre-Confederation Canada. Highland settlers in the Maritimes were often linked by a common origin in Scotland and displayed the same dense pattern of settlement evident among the clansmen of Glengarry.[42] The Irish emigrants studied by J.J. Manion were also principally small farmers from adjacent districts, squeezed out of their traditional holdings by a shift to pastoral farming. However, these Irishmen emigrated as young, unmarried individuals or in nuclear families and took up land in settlements which were Irish, but not kin-based. The key

40. Those who stayed in the Highlands, becoming crofting tenants, were also still committed to the right of the community to the land. Although these clansmen lost their farms, they built new communities and continued to press their right to the land. The tension thus engendered culminated in the "Crofters' Wars" of the late 19th century; see James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community* (Edinburgh, 1976).

41. In "How Tame were the Highlanders during the Clearances?", *Scottish Studies*, XVII (1973), Eric Richards refers to a minimum of forty instances of a pre-industrial type of violent response to the Clearances. Clearly, if emigration is also viewed as a protest, the level of violence was much more substantial.

42. Charles Dunn, *Highland Settler* (Toronto, 1953), p. 26.

to the difference between Irish and Highland emigration might be in the weakening of traditional Gaelic communities in Ireland before departure overseas. Most Irish settlers were already bilingual, and Manion describes emigration as a "highly individualistic solution to the economic and social ills that encumbered the Irish peasant."[43] In contrast emigration to Glengarry County was a communal solution to the problems facing the clansmen of western Inverness.

Several small emigrant groups also displayed a pattern of emigration which in some ways mirrored the experience of the Glengarry settlers. Similarities are evident between the Glengarry immigrants and the Yorkshire settlers of Cumberland County, Nova Scotia. Many of these Englishmen were prosperous tenant farmers who left the north and east ridings in family groups between 1772 and 1774, because enclosures and rising rents threatened their possession of the land.[44] The ballad of the *Albion*, which describes a party of Welsh emigrants to New Brunswick, points to several tantalizing resemblances between them and the Glengarry settlers. The 150 Welsh-speakers were "not a desperate and dispossessed rabble" but farmers who "possessed a powerful and coherent sense of communal identity."[45]

What these cases do is to suggest that the individual elements of the pattern of emigration to Glengarry County were not uncommon in the Canadian experience. In particular farming families from a middling level of society in regions across Britain and Ireland were likely to emigrate, quite often in the company of friends. These people left their homes in response to the actual or feared loss of social and economic status that followed on agricultural improvement and the commercialization of land-holding in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the exceptional case of the Glengarry immigrants, circumstances favoured the departure of some three thousand people in a series of community based emigrations to a single destination over more than sixty years. It is this intense and sustained character that makes Highland emigration to Glengarry County exceptional and explains the overwhelmingly Scottish origin of the new community.

43. J.J. Manion, *Irish Settlement in Eastern Canada* (Toronto, 1974), pp. 16-8.
44. Mildred Campbell, "English Emigration", pp. 10-3.
45. Peter Thomas, introduction to "The Ballad of the Albion", *Acadiensis*, XI (Autumn, 1981), p. 83.